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**Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind  
Media and Communications Division**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**ASDB's Phoenix Day School for the Deaf Students Victorious Again at  
National Battle of the Books Contest!**

**Phoenix, AZ, May 15, 2017** – Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB) Superintendent Annette Reichman proudly announced today that ASDB's Phoenix Day School for the Deaf (PDS) has triumphed, once again, at Gallaudet University's National Battle of the Books contest held in Washington, D.C. For the third year in a row, PDS's teams have dominated at nationals in this prestigious reading proficiency challenge for deaf and hard-of-hearing middle school students.

This year, both of PDS's student teams (Blue and Green) placed second at nationals in their respective divisions. In both 2015 and 2016, PDS's Buff Team won the national championship in its division. The Buff division is comprised of students with the highest reading proficiency levels. To reach nationals, teams from nearly 50 schools for the deaf from across the country had to, first, compete in preliminaries and regional playoffs.

"I am extremely proud of each of our students who competed and succeeded at the highest levels at nationals in the Battle of the Book's literacy and reading proficiency events," said Superintendent Reichman. "It is an impressive achievement and testament to our students' dedication to learning and our hard-working staff's commitment to teaching that PDS student teams, three years running, have won top awards in this prestigious national competition."

In addition to team honors, two of PDS's individual team members, Coffey King and Mattea King, were awarded "All-Star" awards for their knowledge of the competition books, sportsmanship, and dedication to excellence. Coffey King's Blue division teammates were Rue Abrams-Gay and Faith Makarewicz. Mattea King's Green division teammates were Ducati Camacho and Maria Gallerdo-Caudillo. Each color-designated division (Green, Blue and Buff) represents students who compete at different reading proficiency levels.

"To see the students' drive, commitment and focus in preparation for this competition was inspiring," stated Principal Courtney Fritz. "The students work together and push each other to do their very best. They become fully immersed in the stories. They work on comprehension, character development and plot in order to thoroughly prepare themselves for the competition. Our teams have done well due to their dedication and teamwork. I couldn't be more proud."

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Impressively, at PDSB, students are unaided in any way from faculty. Instead, to prepare for this annual reading and literacy challenge, PDSB students meet after school in study groups, where students create their own questions to quiz each other on, explore reading materials and practice giving presentations on books they've read.

The purpose of Gallaudet University's Battle of the Books national competition is to promote literacy among deaf and hard of hearing middle school students. [Gallaudet University](#), federally chartered in 1864, is a bilingual (American Sign Language and English), diverse, multicultural institution of higher education for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

*The [Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind \(ASDB\)](#) was founded in 1912 – the year of Arizona's statehood. ASDB serves over 2,000 children who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard-of-hearing, multisensory disabled or deafblind from birth to age 21. ASDB operates two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind, a statewide birth-to-three early childhood and family education program and five regional cooperatives. ASDB is dedicated to empowering young children and students with the educational opportunities necessary to succeed in college, career and life. For more information contact Ryan Ducharme at [ryan.ducharme@asdb.az.gov](mailto:ryan.ducharme@asdb.az.gov) or 602-771-1092.*

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